

THE KENTUCKY INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND
THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

1844-45

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF VISITERS

OF THE

KENTUCKY INSTITUTION

FOR THE

EDUCATION OF THE BLIND.

BOARD OF VISITERS.

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OTIS PATTEN, TEACHER.
JOSEPH B. SMITH, TEACHER OF VOCAL MUSIC.
MRS. S. P. SPOONER, MATRON.

ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

The Board of Visitors of the Kentucky Institution for the Education of the Blind, in compliance with the requisitions of the charter, respectfully present their

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT.

The Institution is in a very prosperous condition, in all its departments, except its finances.

The receipts of the Institution, for the year ending January 1, 1845, have arisen from the following sources:

Balance in cash, from account of preceding year,	-	-	\$ 46 26
Paying pupils,	-	-	279 00
Proceeds of an Exhibition by the pupils,	-	-	38 00
Sales of articles manufactured by pupils,	-	-	336 98
Individual donations,	-	-	37 25
Appropriation by the State in 1844,	-	-	5,000 00
Common School Fund,	-	-	2,940 00
			\$8,677 49

The expenditures during the year, for house rent, repairs, fuel, provisions, furniture, stable expenses, raw materials, and tools for the work shops, musical instruments, school apparatus, expenses of exhibition before the General Assembly, wages of servants and laborers, and salaries of officers, have amounted to

	-	-	\$3,373 38
Amount expended in the new building,	-	-	4,994 22
Insurance,	-	-	34 00
Call and interest on note given for lot of ground,	-	-	376 36
			\$8,777 96

Giving a balance against the Institution, - - - \$ 100 47
 Of the ten thousand dollars appropriated out of the revenue of the Common School Fund, in 1842, there remains unpaid, 4,682 50

Leaving a balance in favor of the Institution,	-	-	\$4,582 03
Amount carried forward,	-	-	\$4,582 03

Amount brought forward,	-	-	-	\$4,582 03
In our last report, we stated that the Institution was indebted to the Bank of Louisville, \$1,500, the amount expended in a lot of ground intended for the site of the buildings of the Institution; of this sum there remains unpaid,	-	-	-	\$1,200 00
Giving a nominal balance in favor of the Institution,	-	-	-	<u>\$3,382 03</u>

In conformity to an act of the General Assembly, approved February 29, 1844, a building for the accommodation of the Institution, has been erected, and the above balance, \$3,382, has been pledged to finish it, it having been estimated that that amount will be required to complete it according to the design. From these statements, the members of the General Assembly will perceive the absolute necessity of making some provision for keeping the Institution in operation during the present year, as it is entirely destitute of the means of support.

On the 10th day of April, 1844, in pursuance of an act of the General Assembly, entitled, "an act to incorporate the Louisville and Portland Railroad Company," approved 2d March, 1844, the corporators named in said act, were duly organized and accepted of the charter, for the purposes therein mentioned. And on the 8th January, 1845, the President and Secretary of said Board, made the following communication to the President and Visitors of the Kentucky Institution for the Education of the Blind, to-wit:

"LOUISVILLE, 8th January 1845.

The undersigned, a committee appointed by the President and Managers of the Louisville and Portland Railroad Company, make the following report of its condition and prospects: Immediately after the organization of the Board of Managers, in April, 1844, a thorough examination of the condition of said road was made. It was found that a large sum of money would be required to place the road in a condition to be at all beneficial to the Institution for the Blind; and it was, therefore, determined, to save from loss, with the least expense, whatever belonged to said road; this has been effected, thus far, by letting said road for the small sum of sixty dollars. We are of opinion that this cannot be longer done than April next. If we are right in this conjecture, then the iron rails must be taken up, and, together with the other apparatus, stored away, to protect them from loss, which will require an expenditure of money much larger than the sum received.

Very respectfully,

DAVID L. BEATTY, }
CH. J. CLARKE, } *Committee.*

To the President and Managers of the Ky. Inst. for the Blind."

The funds entrusted to the Board of Visitors hitherto, have, it is believed, been expended in the most judicious and economical manner, and valuable property has thus been secured to the State, at a cost much below its real value. The services of faithful officers have been obtained, and a flourishing school, which is an honor to the State, has been kept in operation, at very small expense; and we now commend all the interests of the Institution to the representatives of a generous and enlightened people.

The new edifice, though commodious and beautiful, has been built in the most economical manner, and on the most favorable terms, as all admit, who

compare the cost of the work with the extent and character of it. The building is 96 feet in length, 50 feet in width, 3 stories high, and contains 35 rooms, one of which is a hall for concerts, exhibitions, &c. Though complete in itself, it is, in accordance with the directions of the General Assembly, so constructed that it can hereafter be enlarged by the addition of one or two wings, should the increase in the number of pupils ever require it.

We have twenty two pupils; a number as large as the house now occupied will accommodate. In a few months, when the new building shall be ready for the reception of the pupils, we shall considerably increase the number, by receiving others who have already applied for admission, but who cannot be received at present, for want of room. It is greatly to be regretted that any applicants should be rejected, as out of about 9,000 white blind persons in the United States, less than 400 are now enjoying the blessings of instruction in the various schools that have been established for their benefit.

The health of our pupils has continued to improve from the opening of the Institution, in the year 1842, to the present time; they now generally enjoy good health, and it is very rarely necessary to call a physician. This is peculiarly gratifying, as the blind are much more liable to disease than seeing persons, and most of our pupils enter the Institution with constitutions enfeebled by the inactive and irregular habits into which they have fallen, through the neglect or mistaken tenderness of their parents, or other persons to whose care they have been entrusted. The improvement in their health is to be ascribed, under Providence, to the healthy location of the Institution; to the skill and attention of the attending physician; to the cleanliness that is required of the pupils; to their healthy diet; to the regularity in the hours of eating, study, labor, amusement, and repose, and more especially, to the careful and judicious physical training which they receive. The officers of the Institution justly regard physical education as scarcely less valuable than intellectual culture; and consequently, a considerable part of each day is devoted to gymnastic exercises in the open air, and to handicraft in the shops. To the generous physicians in this city, who have offered their services gratuitously, whenever the pupils need medical aid, we tender our grateful acknowledgments.

The progress of the pupils in their studies has been very satisfactory. Their improvement in reading affords us peculiar pleasure. From the course pursued with adult pupils in other similar Institutions, we were not prepared to expect that our older pupils would learn to read the embossed books with any facility; but so great have been the efforts both of teachers and scholars, that all our pupils, with the exception of one little boy, who entered a few days since, can now read the Bible with considerable fluency. Long and painful efforts have, in several instances, been necessary to produce this pleasing result; and often have some of our pupils, notwithstanding their earnest desire to learn to read, been ready to yield to discouragement; but stimulated by their teachers, and by their own thirst for knowledge, they have returned to their books with increased resolution. The difficulties have been happily overcome, the Bible is no longer a sealed book to them, and nothing could now purchase from them the privilege of reading with their own fingers, that volume which brings to light the life of immortality. They justly prize the Bible very highly, for to the influence of its precepts are schools for the blind, and all other benevolent institutions, indebted for their existence.

We consider reading the most important branch to which the blind can attend; as it not only affords them, while at school, profitable and interesting occupation for many leisure hours that would otherwise be mis-spent, but it will, more than any other branch, be a means of consolation and improvement in their lonely habitations after they leave the Institution. From the success that has hitherto attended the efforts of our teachers, we believe that if the same attention be given to the instruction of the blind in reading, that is usually devoted to the seeing, the progress of the former will generally be equal to that of the latter.

Our thanks are due to the American Bible Society, for four copies of the Book of Psalms, and one copy of the entire Bible, presented to our indigent pupils during the last year. We have been prevented from purchasing books, by the low state of the funds of the Institution, and the above mentioned donation was therefore peculiarly acceptable.

In Writing, Spelling, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geography, English Grammar, Latin, &c. the pupils have made creditable proficiency.

The hours of study and labor are arranged as follows:

At 5 o'clock, A. M., the pupils rise and prepare for school.

From 5½ to 6½, they read the embossed books.

6½ to 7¼, Breakfast and recreation.

7¼ to 8, Devotional exercises.

8 to 9, All listen to the reading of History, news of the day, &c.

9 to 10, Writing and Arithmetic.

10 to 11, Vocal Music.

11 to 12, Geography and English Language.

12 to 1, Algebra and Arithmetic.

1 to 2½, Dinner and recreation.

2½ to 5, Instrumental Music and Handicraft.

5 to 7, Recreation and supper.

7 to 7½, Vocal Music.

7½ to 8, Reading. At 8, the younger pupils retire to rest.

8 to 9½, The older pupils read, or prepare lessons for the ensuing day. At 9½ they retire.

At the end of every hour in the forenoon, there is a short recess.

The object of education, however, is not the cultivation of the intellect alone—it has to do with the moral powers. To cultivate the former is to place in the hands of the pupil a powerful instrument for good or for evil; to cultivate the latter is to enable him to use that instrument aright. Desirable as it is that the blind should possess well cultivated intellectual powers, it is vastly more important that they should become useful and happy members of society. The moral training of the pupils requires the most arduous and constant efforts on the part of the officers of the Institution. In the intellectual department, their duties are, for the most part, confined to specified hours, and to particular subjects; but in cultivating the morals and affections of the pupils, their labors are unlimited and incessant. The extent and success of their efforts may be less apparent in this department than in any other, as they can be duly appreciated by those only who are aware of the cruel indulgence or unkind neglect which the blind too frequently experience at home; in consequence of which many of them enter the Institution destitute of moral, as well as intellectual, culture.

It gives us pleasure to state that a great change has been effected; pernicious

cious habits have been eradicated, a love of learning has been awakened, self-reliance and self-respect have been greatly increased, conscience has been improved, and a regard for the Bible, as the standard of feeling and action, has been strengthened. In producing these happy results, a course of lectures by the Director has had an important influence.

In music, the improvement of the pupils has been great. They already perform many difficult pieces in a manner that would do credit to any choir in the city; and from the increased facilities we hope to afford them hereafter, we may expect still more rapid progress during the present year. We have recently secured, in the department of Vocal Music, at very small expense, the valuable services of Mr. Joseph B. Smith, a graduate of Harvard University, and formerly a pupil in the Institution for the Blind in Boston. He is a scientific musician, and ardently devoted to his profession, and having been blind from infancy, he is the better qualified to appreciate the difficulties of the blind, and to adapt his instructions to their peculiar wants.

Music deserves a prominent place in every system of education, on account of its happy influence on the moral and intellectual powers; but it is especially important in the education of the blind. Excluded as they are from the enjoyments of visible beauty, many of their leisure hours must be dull indeed, unless they are taught to enliven them by music. Music is not, however, merely a source of amusement to the blind; to many of them, at least, it offers the best means of gaining an honorable livelihood, as organists, as pianists, or as teachers of music. Our pupils take great interest in this branch, and all, with one exception, receive instruction in it daily. They do not learn by rote, as some suppose, but become accurately acquainted with the principles and rules of the science.

Several pianos, and an organ, are much needed in the Institution; but here too we have been deterred from purchasing, by the want of means. We trust the liberality of the Legislature will enable us to furnish the blind with all needed aid in this important branch, which more than any other, perhaps, offers them compensation for the loss of the blessings of vision.

The progress of the pupils in handicraft has been highly creditable. The brushes, cushions, mattresses, and fancy articles, manufactured by them, are greatly admired by visitors, and give general satisfaction to purchasers, to whom they are sold at low prices, in order to bring them into the market. The citizens of Louisville are learning, that by purchasing the articles made by our pupils, they not only confer a favor on the blind, but make a good bargain for themselves. The female pupils have been taught by Mrs. Spooner, the matron, to make many kinds of worsted articles, which are both beautiful and useful, and it is believed that the profits from this kind of work will hereafter be large, and that many of the girls will be able to support themselves by it after they leave the Institution. The females also prepare the covers for the cushions and mattresses, besides doing much of the plain sewing for the Institution. In the various kinds of handicraft, our pupils, with few exceptions, feel much interest, and regard the mechanical operations as a pleasant and valuable part of the regular school exercises; and, while engaged in them, they often enliven their labors with sprightly conversation, and sometimes, when the nature of the work will allow it, with singing. The more indolent boys at first manifested some repugnance to work, arising, in part, from the erroneous idea that manual labor has something of degradation necessarily associated with it. The officers have taken great pains to remove

this mistaken notion; and all the pupils are required to devote a portion of every day to exercises so essential to their present and future well-being; for while to many, the trades, thus acquired, will be the only means of support, to all, the exercises in the shops are necessary, as a part of physical education. From the happy influence of this part of our system, we cannot but believe that schools for seeing pupils might, with great advantage, adopt a similar course with regard to manual labor.

The profits arising from sales of articles manufactured by our pupils during the past year, have amounted to one hundred dollars.

The Officers of the Ohio and Virginia Institutions for the Blind, will please accept our thanks for some beautiful specimens of brushes and worsted work, manufactured by their pupils.

Mr. Patten, the Director of our Institution, during the present session of the General Assembly of Indiana, accepted an invitation to visit Indianapolis with some of the pupils, and gave exhibitions before the Legislature; and so great was the interest awakened, that an appropriation will probably be made for the support of the indigent blind children of that State.

Exhibitions have also been given in New Albany, Ia., and in Covington, Maysville, Nicholasville, and Lexington, in this State, and much important information with respect to the wants and capabilities of the blind, has in this manner, been diffused among the people. It is desirable that the pupils should travel more extensively in Kentucky during the present year, and thus make known the munificence of the Legislature, and the character and privileges of the Institution to the remotest parts of the State.

At a meeting of the Board of Visitors of the Kentucky Institution for the Blind, held on the 9th day of January, 1845, the above report was presented, read, and adopted.

BRYCE M. PATTEN,
Secretary of the Board of Visitors.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

REGULATIONS OF THE INSTITUTION.

BOARD OF VISITERS.

The Board shall, at every monthly meeting, designate one of its members to visit the Institution every week of the ensuing month, examine the School and Boarding House, ascertain the condition and progress of the same, and report at the next regular meeting of the Board.

DIRECTOR.

The Institution shall be under the charge of a Director, who shall reside in the house with the pupils, and direct their studies, labor, and recreation. He shall report weekly to the Visiter appointed for that purpose, the state and progress of the School, and make, from time to time, such suggestions as he may think the interests of the Institution require.

The teachers, matron, and all subordinate officers, shall be under the general supervision of the Director.

MATRON.

The Matron shall, under the direction of the Director, have charge of the domestic concerns of the Institution. She shall superintend the clothing of the pupils, and endeavor to promote their health, morals, and happiness; and co-operate with the Director and Teachers in their government and education.

COURSE OF STUDY.

Reading, Spelling, Writing, Geography, English Grammar, Arithmetic, the higher branches of Mathematics, Ancient and Modern Languages, Vocal and Instrumental Music, and other branches of learning usually taught in Academies for seeing children.

EXPENSES.

For board, washing, tuition, music, books, and stationery, \$100 per year. Payments to be made quarterly in advance.

ADMISSION OF PUPILS.

No person can be admitted as a pupil, who is under six or over fifteen years of age, unless by special vote of the Board of Visitors. Candidates for admission must present certificates from some respectable physician, of incurable blindness, and of freedom from epilepsy and all offensive and infectious diseases. They must also bring satisfactory testimonials of unexceptionable moral character.

The male pupils must be provided with at least five shirts, two vests, two coats or jackets, two pairs of pantaloons, six pairs of socks or stockings, two stocks or cravats, four pocket handkerchiefs, two pairs of boots or shoes, all in good condition.

The female pupils must be provided with at least three changes of garment. All the articles of clothing must be marked with the name of the owner. The clothing must be renewed by the parents or friends of the pupils, from time to time, as may be necessary.

BENEFICIARIES.

Indigent children, resident in the State, may be received, and educated at the expense of the Institution. In addition to the above requirements, they must produce certificates from some magistrate or other known respectable citizen, that they are inhabitants of the State of Kentucky, and that their parents and immediate relatives are unable to defray the expenses of their education.

The expenses of traveling and clothing must, in all cases, be paid by the friends of the pupils, as the Institution has no funds for these purposes.

N. B. In every case of application for the admission of a pupil into the Institution, answers must be made in writing to the following questions:

1. What is the name of the applicant?
2. When and where born?
3. What are the names of the parents?
4. Are they living?
5. What is the name of the Post Office nearest to their residence?
6. What are the pecuniary circumstances of the parents and relations?
7. Is the blindness total?
8. If not, what degree of vision remains?
9. How was the blindness produced?
10. Is the applicant of good natural capacity, and free from bodily defects, and offensive and infectious diseases?
11. Are there other instances of blindness in the same family, or among their relations?

✂ Communications respecting pupils or the Institution, may be addressed to "BRYCE M. PATTEN, Director of the Kentucky Institution for the Education of the Blind, Louisville, Ky." and letters must be post paid.

✂ The Institution is open to the public from 10 to 12 o'clock, every Saturday morning.

The new building is located on Broadway, between First and Second Streets.

